

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ISO-00 OMB-01 TAR-02 SPC-03

AGR-20 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00

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TAGS: EGEN, EMIN, UNCTAD

SUBJECT: UNCTAD COMMODITY CONSULTATIONS - PHOSPHATES

REF: STATE 183729

BEGIN SUMMARY: UNCTAD SEC GEN BELIEVES HE IS COMMITTED TO AFRICAN GROUP TO INCLUDE PHOSPHATES IN INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS. HE CONSIDERS MAIN JUSTIFICATION FOR PHOSPHATES CONSULTATION IS POLITICAL BUT BELIEVES 1972 DISCUSSION ON PHOSPHATES SHOWED THERE ARE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WHICH DESERVE CONSIDERATION. INTERESTED GROUP B COUNTRIES BELIEVE THEIR GOVERNMENTS UNLIKELY OBJECT BUT SOME CONSULTING CAPITALS. ACTION REQUESTED: WHILE BELIEVING BRIEF DELAY MAY BE USEFUL TO UNDERLINE OUR RELUCTANCE ADD COMMODITIES TO LIST, MISSION REQUESTS GREEN LIGHT ACCEPT PHOSPHATES CONSULTATION WHEN TIME PROPITIOUS. END SUMMARY.

1. ECOMIN MET SEPTEMBER 19 WITH UNCTAD SEC GEN PEREZ-GUERRERO (PG) TO DISCUSS INTENSIVE COMMODITY CONSULTATIONS
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AND PARTICULARLY PHOSPHATES. PG SAID HE UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE AT BOARD EXPAND LIST OF COMMODITIES. SEVERAL LDCS UNHAPPY

MOST CONSULTATIONS OUTSIDE UNCTAD AND PARTICULARLY WANTED SOME MINERALS COVERED EITHER IN INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS UNDER RES 7(VII) OF COMMITTEE ON COMMODITIES OR CONFERENCE RES 16(II). MAIN INTEREST BEYOND COMMODITIES ALREADY AGREED CENTERED ON COFFEE, PHOSPHATES, IRON ORE AND MEAT. IN EFFORT RELIEVE PRESSURE FOR EXPANDED LIST AND AT SAME TIME TRY HELP RESOLVE COFFEE PROBLEM, PG UNDERTOOK CONSULT WITH GOVERNMENTS ON PHOSPHATES AND REPORTED TO LDCS THAT GROUP B WAS AGREEABLE. WHEN ASIAN GROUP MOVED TO BREAK DEADLOCK, HE PERSUADED AFRICANS TO DROP PHOSPHATES FROM RESOLUTION ON GROUNDS HE HAD ALREADY OBTAINED AGREEMENT AND MATTER SHOULD NOT BE TREATED SAME AS COFFEE. IN RUSH TO FINISH WORK, THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF PHOSPHATES WITH OTHER GROUPS AND NOTHING WAS INSERTED IN OFFICIAL RECORD. PG, HOWEVER, FEELS COMMITTED TO AFRICAN GROUP. HE POINTED OUT IN PASSING THAT INTEREST OF GROUP B COUNTRIES IN MAINTAINING RIGHT OF VETO HAD BEEN BETTER SERVED BY NOT HAVING PHOSPHATES INCLUDED WITH COFFEE IN RESOLUTION WHICH WAS NOT UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORTED.

2. ECMIN REMINDED PG THAT U.S. AND GROUP B AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE PHOSPHATES IN TIMETABLE (WITHOUT COMMITMENT BY INDIVIDUAL DELS TO PARTICIPATION IN CONSULTATION) WAS CONTRIBUTION TO EFFORT TO RESOLVE COFFEE PROBLEM AND OBTAIN UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT ON INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS. IN ABSENCE OF CONSENSUS AND CLEAR DECISION ON PHOSPHATES, GROUP B HAD NO COMMITMENT TO PHOSPHATES. SAID PHOSPHATES, HOWEVER, ONLY SYMPTOMATIC OF BROADER ISSUE OF EXPANSION OF LIST OF COMMODITIES WHICH IS PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF U.S. AND GROUP B. IF GROUP B ACCEPTS PHOSPHATES THIS WOULD BE ONLY WITH VERY STRONG PRESUMPTION THAT NO MORE COMMODITIES WILL BE ADDED, AT LEAST IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. HE ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE THAT IF PHOSPHATES ADDED, THIS WOULD BE WITH UNDERSTANDING PG WOULD DISCOURAGE ADDITION OF OTHER COMMODITIES. PG SAID UNCTAD PLATE ALREADY FULL AND HE READY DO HIS BEST TO PREVENT FURTHER EXPANSION OF LIST. HE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT HE CANNOT PREVENT GOVERNMENTS OF LDCS FROM PRESSING FOR ACTION THEY THINK NECESSARY.

3. ON QUESTION OF JUSTIFICATION, PG INDICATED MAIN ISSUE IS POLITICAL; COFFEE AND PHOSPHATES WERE TOP PRIORITY PART OF AFRICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PACKAGE DEAL REACHED AT OAU MINISTERIAL MEETING. HOWEVER CONSULTATION OF 1972 SHOWED THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT COULD BE USEFULLY DISCUSSED SUCH AS LONG-TERM PRICE TREND FOR PHOSPHATES (SEE TD/B/C.1/PHOS/CONS/1).

4. PG AGREED HOLD UP ISSUANCE AID MEMOIRE TO ALLOW TIME FOR CONTACT WITH CAPITALS. HE URGED QUICK RESPONSE, HOWEVER, ON GROUNDS DELAY MAY LEAD TO RENEWED PRESSURE ADD MORE COMMODITIES.

5. WE HAVE CHECKED WITH MISSIONS OF GROUP B COUNTRIES WHICH ATTENDED 1972 CONSULTATION ON PHOSPHATES. WHILE PREFERRING NOT ADD ADDITIONAL COMMODITY, THEY THOUGHT THEIR GOVERNMENTS UNLIKELY TO OBJECT (PARTICULARLY IF U.S. GOES ALONG) BUT SOME WISH CHECK WITH CAPITALS. AFRICAN COMMODITIES SPOKESMAN AWOKOYA (NIGERIA), LIKE PG, SAID HE THOUGHT PHOSPHATES HAD BEEN AGREED AND RESOLUTION OMITTED MENTION FOR THIS REASON. HIS MAIN CONCERN IS NOT OFFENDING NORTH AFRICANS (MOROCCO SPECIFICALLY) WHO SUPPORTED SOLID AFRICAN POSITION ON COFFEE.

6. COMMENT: MISSION BELIEVES BRIEF DELAY MIGHT BE USEFUL IN ACCOMPLISHING OUR PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF DISCOURAGING ADDITION OF OTHER COMMODITIES. WE ARE NOT PERSUADED THAT DELAY IN ISSUANCE OF AIDE MEMOIRE INCREASES RISK OF FURTHER ADDITIONS TO LIST OF COMMODITIES. IF SECRETARIAT INSISTS AIDE MEMOIRE MUST BE ISSUED IMMEDIATELY, IT CAN ALWAYS DO SO WITHOUT ADDITION OF PHOSPHATES FOR MOMENT. MISSION WOULD LIKE BE IN POSITION ACT WHEN APPROPRIATE AND THEREFORE REQUESTS WASHINGTON GREEN LIGHT REFERRED TO IN PARA 5 REFTEL. FACT THAT INDIVIDUAL DELS NOT COMMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS AND OTHER SPECIFIC CONSULTATIONS IS CLEAR AND IS ACCEPTED AND RECORDED.BASSIN

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